Charleston March 23rd 1866

Dear friend

This is the first spare moment that I have had for some time, but now begin to feel a little more settled, had been some time before this House hunting, and at last found the one that I now occupy it is small but very pleasantly situated in the western portion of our City entirely open to the sea breeze. Houses are very scarce, and rents dreadfully high - and almost every thing in proportion - there must be a decline in prices some where for the salarys paid our Gentlemen are not suffic[ient] for them to meet their expenses, of course there are a great many exceptions, it is of men with large family that I speak - of course the people are still paying dear - for being so hasty in the beginning of this war - and will have to suffer yet more -, persons that once lived in large splendid dwellings - are now compelled to rent - them, and occupy smale ones that they rented out - The news from the country is very cheering as regards the Freedmen working and if they will only continue, after a while all - will go right - it is batten and hire

that will put all things straight again Northern gentlemen - a great many have come out here with means - have taken some of our Plantations in hand - and report the Yankees doing well - hundreds of our Country Negroes since the evacuation have died of course left to themselves: they naturally breed sickness, although if one is reported sick - they are immediately taken to the Hospital and every care taken of them - the small pox has made sad havoc among them, I could not help laughing the other day - I met a girl I knew: - and she never could say that she was fureys painted love - she had had the small pox and was awfully pitted almost to disfigure her for life, with a thick green veil on - said she never would go out without it again: not being accustomed to the delicate gauze over their chiseled features; could hardly walk - however they will soon learn to see, as they will have to work, -

To day is such a beautiful day nature itself seems happy and gay - our peach trees wear a pink mantle so very thick with blossoms, and our first crop of Figs are as large as your thimble, - if we

have no more cold snap next month
our fruit will be very early = our green
pea is 5 or 6 inches high = we have not had
rain for some time now = the cisterns are
nearly all dry = although with April
comes her gentle showers = so many people
were come back home now, that King street
where most all our drygoods business is
done = is crowded with ladies = dressed
with some style and tast = a great many
strangers on visits here = most all seem
delighted with our climate = —
CW. Quitty is stile with us quite
well = got a letter from home last night
says that he will not be so negligent
in writing again will write more frequen
I am glad that you were so successful with
your fair = they are removing the old bricks
and stones from the Cathedral = in Broad St
to try and rebuild = may they be prosperous =
it was a grand ornament to our City = now
that things are quiet = our Sisters of Mercy
will have a fair, next winter or sooner
maybe = if nothing happens = it is visited by
all with feelings of pleasure = I have written
you a long letter, you must do the same
when you write me = hoping this will find
your Mother and all well = as this leaves

my family.

With much affection
your friend
Julia E. Crafts